

# CIA blames critics for shooting

By JOHN COOK

The CIA has launched a new attack against its critics following the shooting of Athens station chief Richard Welch.

Welch was assassinated Dec. 23 by unidentified assailants in front of his house in suburban Athens. The CIA and several of its supportive organizations have used the killing as a stepping stone to retaliate against its domestic detractors after a year of damning exposes.

CIA officials have stated that the blood of Welch's death is on the hands of Americans who have publicly identified CIA agents abroad. Chief on their list of enemies of the CIA are former agents Philip Agee and Victor Marchetti, who have published books exposing covert CIA activities abroad; Counter-Spy and its publisher, the Fifth Estate, which distribute quarterly accounts of CIA "abuses of power" and the

Several rightwing congressmen have called for a full investigation of Counter-Spy by the Senate Internal Security Committee and others have called for prosecution of the group under the Espionage Act.

Counter-Spy had published Welch's name along with 150 others in its Spring issue. At the time, Welch was station chief at the CIA's Lima, Peru, office. An Athens newspaper, the Athens Daily News, published Welch's name, position, address and telephone number in Athens about three weeks ago. His position in the CIA was obvious enough since the CIA has owned the house he was living in for years.

Counter-Spy issued a statement denouncing the charges leveled against it by CIA supporters, stating that the assassination was the direct result of the "worldwide hostility that the CIA has helped to generate against the United States."

Counter-Spy said its policy for publishing names of CIA agents abroad is that "any names published as CIA by foreign press organs can and will be republished. . . . Only those who live in the U.S. are denied that information."

## MISSIONARIES TOLD

Tim Butz, the editor of Counter-Spy, told the Washington Post that Welch's name had originally come from two Peruvian missionaries who saw it in a local newspaper there. The name was checked in the State Department Biographic Register and it became obvious that Welch was a CIA agent.

He had served in Cyprus from 1960 to 1963 then moved to Guatemala in 1965 to conduct counterinsurgency campaigns against guerrillas and then went to Guyana to subvert the progressive movement headed by Cheddi Jagan. He later worked in Peru after the leftist military regime expropriated vast U.S.-owned oil properties.

Doug Porter, also an editor of Counter-Spy told the Guardian that they were unaware of Welch's move to Greece and that they had not been in contact with the Greek paper that published the information on him.

Congressional liberals who have conducted investigations of the so-called intelligence community.

The opening salvo was fired by David Phillips, resident of the Association of Retired Intelligence Officers, a group organized to shore up the CIA's flagging public face. Phillips told the Washington Star that Welch's death "represents the tragic tides of occurrences which become inevitable when Mr. Agee initiated and others associated themselves with the sordid practice of identifying American intelligence officers overseas."

Angus McClaine Thurmor, CIA press spokesman, told the Associated Press that Welch was killed because he had been exposed as a CIA agent. "We had another American gunned down by other Americans fingering him, right or wrong, as a CIA agent," he said.

CIA director William Colby and President Ford also placed the blame for the death on Counter-Spy.

Counter-Spy has published some 225 names of CIA agents, including Welch's, and has announced that it intends to continue the practice.

## COUNTER-SPY THREATENED

Counter-Spy was included in a list of groups and individuals threatened with death by a rightist organization for their exposures of the CIA. The list, signed by the Veterans Against Communist Sympathizers, also targeted Sen. Frank Church (D-Iowa), who heads the Senate Intelligence Committee investigation of the CIA and Rep. Otis Pike (D-N.Y.), who heads the House Intelligence Committee.

The list was delivered to a television station in Texas and the FBI was notified but did not inform Counter-Spy it was on the list, although they notified the others.